

A
DISCOURSE
OF LIFE AND
DEATH:

VVRITTEN IN
French by PHIL.
MORNAY. K

*Done in English by the Count-
resse of Pembroke.*



AT LONDON,
Printed by H. L. for Ma-
thew Lownes, and are to bee
soulde at his shop in Paules
Churchyard. 1606.



P. LI MONAY^R.

DISCOGRAPH
OF DISC
GRAPH

WRITTEN IN
English by



At London
Printed by
Wm. A. ...
10, ...
Chancery Lane



A
DISCOURSE
OF LIFE AND
DEATH, WRIT-

ten in french by PHIL.

MORNAY, *Sieur de*

Plessis Marly.



7 I seemes to
mee strange,
and a thing
much to bee
marueiled, that the la-
borer to repose himself
hasteneth as is were the

A discourse of

course of the Sun : that
the Mariner rows with
all force & attain the port
and with a ioyful cry sa-
lutes the descried land :
that the traoueller is ne-
uer quiet nor content til
hee be at the end of his
voyage : and that we in
the meane vvhile tyed
in this world to a perpe-
tuall taske, tossed with
continuall tēpest, tyred
with a rough and com-
berfom way, cannot yet
see the end of our labor
but with grieffe, nor be-
hold our port but with
tears, nor approche our

A home

Life and Death.

home and quiet abode
but with with horrou
and trembling. This life
is but a *Penelopes* web,
wherein we are alwaies
doing & vndoing: a sea
opē to all winds, which
somtime within, some-
time without neuer cease
to torment vs: a weary
iourney through extream
heats, & colds, over high
mountains, steep rocks,
& theeuish deserts. And
so wee tearme it in wea-
uing at this web, in ro-
wing at this oare, in pas-
sing this miserable way:
yet lo whē death comes

A discourse of

to end our worke, when
shee stretcheth out hir
armes to pull vs into
the port, when after so
many dangerous passa-
ges, and loathsome lod-
gings she would cōduct
vs to our true home and
resting place: instead of
reioicing at the end of
our labor, of taking cō-
fort at the sight of our
land, of singing at the
approche of our happie
mansion, we would fain
(who would believe it?)
retake our worke in
hand, we would againe
hoise saile to the wind,

and

Life and Death.

and willingly vndertake
our iourney anew. No
more, then, remember
we our paines, our ship-
wracks and dangers are
forgotten: we feare no
more the trauelles nor
the theeues. Contrari-
wise, wee apprehend
death as an extreame
paine, we doubt it as a
rocke, wee flie it as a
thiefe. We do as little
childrē, who all the day
complaine, and when
the medicin is brought
them, are no longer
sicke: as they, who (all
the weeke long) runne

A discourse of

vp & downe the streets
with paine of the teeth,
and seeing the Barber
comming to pull them
out, feele no more pain:
as those tender and de-
licate bodies, who in a
pricking plurisie com-
plaine, cry out, and can-
not stay for a Surgion,
and when they see him
whetting his Launcet
to cut the throat of the
disease, pul in their arms
& hide them in the bed,
as if hee were come to
kill them. Wee feare
more the cure then the
disease, the Surgion the

the

Life and Death.

the paine, the stroke the
the impostume: Wee
haue more sence of the
medicines bitternesse
soone gone, then of a
bitter languishing long
continued: more fee-
ling of death the end of
our miseries, then the
endelesse misery of our
life. And whence pro-
ceedeth this folly and
simplicity? we neither
knowe life, nor death.
Wee fear that we ought
to hope for, and wishe
for that wee ought to
feare. Wee call life a
continuall death: and

A discourse of

death the issue of a li-
uing death, and the en-
trance of a neuer dy-
ing life. Now what
good, I pray you, is ther
in life, that wee should
so much pursue it? or
what euill is there in
death, that wee should
so much eschue it? Nay
what euill is ther not
in life? and what good
is there not in death?
Consideral the periods
of this life. We enter it
in teares, we passe it in
sweate, wee ende it in
forrow. Great and lit-
tle, rich and poore, not

Life and Death.

one in the whole world
that can plead immuni-
tie from this condition.
Man, in this point worse
then all other creatures,
is borne vnable to sup-
port himselfe; neither
receiuing in his first
yeares any pleasure, nor
giuing to others but an-
noy & displeasure, and
before the age of discre-
tion passing infinit dan-
gers: Onely herein lesse
vnhappie then in other
ages, that hee hath no
sense nor apprehension
of his unhappinesse.
Now, is there any so

weake

A discourse of

weake minded, that if it were graunted him to liue alwayes a childe, would make account of such a life? So then it is euident, that not simplic to liue is a good, but wel and happily to liue. But proceed. Growes he? with him grow his tra-uailes. Scarcely is hee come out of his nurses hands, scarcely knowes what it is to play, but he falleth into the subiectiō of some schoolemaster: I speake but of those which are best & most precisely brought vp: Stu-

dies

Life and Death.

dies he is euer with re-
pining. Playes he? ne-
uer but with feare. This
whole age while he is
vnder the charge of an-
other, is vnto him but as
a prison: he only thinks,
and only aspires to that
time whē freed from the
mastership of another,
he may become master
of himselfe; pushing on-
ward (as much as in him
lyes) his age with his
shoulder, that soone he
may enioy his hoped li-
bertie. In short, he desires
nothing more then y^e end
of this base age, and the

begin-

A discourse of

beginning of his youth. And what else I pray you is the beginning of youth, but the death of infancy? the beginning of manhood, but the death of youth? the beginning of to morrow, but the death of to day? In this sort then desires he his death, & iudgeth his life miserable: and so cannot be reputed in any happinesse or contentment. Behold him now, according to his wish, at liberty: in that age, wherein *Hercules* had the choise, to take

the

Life and Death.

the way of vertue or of vice, reason or passion for his guide, and of these two must take one. His passion entertaines him with a thousand delightes, prepares for him a thousand baits, presents him with a thousand worldly pleasures to surprize him: and fewe there are that are not beguiled. But at the reckonings ende, what pleasures are they? pleasures full of vice, which hold him still in a restlesse feauer: pleasures subiect to repen-

A discourse of

tance, like sweete meates
of hard digestion: plea-
sures bought with paine
and perill, spent and past
in a moment, and follo-
wed with a long & loath-
some remorse of consci-
ence. And this is the ve-
ry nature (if they be well
examined) of al the plea-
sures of this world. Ther
is in none so much sweet-
nes, but ther is more bit-
ternes: none so pleasant
to the mouth, but leaves
an vnflauoury after-taste
and loathsome disdain:
none (which is worse) so
moderated but hath his

Life and Death.

corrosiue, & carries his punishment in it self. I wil not here speak of the displeasures cōfessed by all, as quarells, debates, woundes, murthers, banishments, sicknesse, perill, wherinto sometimes the incōtinencie, sometimes the insolēcy of this ill guided age conducts him. But if those that seeme pleasures, be nothing else but displeasures: if the sweetnes therof be as an infusion of wormwood; it is plain enough vwhat the displeasure is they feele, and how

great

A discourse of

great the bitternes that they taste. Beholde in sum the life of a young man, who rid of the gouernemēt of his parents, abandons himselfe to all liberty or rather bondage of his passion : which, right like an vn-cleane spirit possessing him, casts him now into the water, now into the fire : sometimes carries him cleane over a rocke, and sometime flings him headlong to the bottome. Now if he take and follow reason for his guide, be-

holde

Life and Death.

holde on the other part
wonderfull difficulties:
he must resolve to fight
in euery parte of the
field: at euery step to be
in conflict, & at hand-
strokes, as hauing his e-
nemy in front, in flanke,
& on the rereward, ne-
uer leauing to assaile
him. And what enemy?
al that can delight him,
all that he sees neere, or
far off: briefly the grea-
test enemy of the world,
the world it selfe. But
which is worse, a thou-
sand treacherous and
dangerous intelligen-

A discourse of

ces among his own forces, and his passion within himselfe desperate: which, in that age grown to the highest, awaits but time, houre, & occasion to surprize him & cast him into all viciousnes. God onely and none other can make him choose this waie: God only can hold him in it to the end: God onely can make him victorious in all his combates. And well wee see how few they are that enter into it, and of those few how many that retire a-

gaine

Life and Death.

gaine. Follow the one way or folloove the other, he must eyther subiect himselfe to a tyrannicall passion, or vnder- take a weary & cōtinual combate, willingly cast himself to destructiō, or fetter himselfe as it were in stocks, easily sink with the courle of the water, or painefully swimme against the streame. Loe here the yong man, who in his youth hath drunk his full draught of the worlds vain & deceiue- able pleasures, ouertake by them with such a

dull

A discourse of

dull heauinesse, and astonishment, as drunkards the morow after a feaste: either so out of taste, that hee will no more; or so glutted, that he can no more: not able without griefe to speak, or think of them. Loe him that stoutely hath made resistance: hee feeles himselfe so wearie, and with this continuall conflicte so brused and broken, that eyther hee is vpon the point to yeeld himselfe, or content to die, and so acquit himselfe. And

this

Life and Death.

this is all the good, all the contentment of this flourishing age, by children so earnestly desired, and by old folkes so heartilie lamented. Nowe commeth that which is called perfect age; in the which men haue no other thoughts but to purchase themselves wisdom & rest. Perfect indeed: but herein onely perfect, that all imperfections of humane nature, hidden before vnder the simplicity of childhood, or the lightnesse of youth, ap-

peare

A discourse of

peare at this age in their
perfection. We speake
of none in this place but
such as are esteemed
the wisest, & most hap-
py in the conceit of the
world. We played as
you have scene in feare:
our shorte pleasures
were attended on with
long repentance. Be-
hold, now present them
selues to vs auarice, and
ambition, promising, if
wee will, adore them,
perfect contentment of
the goods and honors
of this world. And sure-
ly there are none, but the

Life and Death.

true Children of the Lord, who by the faire illusions of the one or the other cast not themselves headlong from the top of the pinnacle. But in the end, what is all this contentment? The couctous man makes a thousand voyages by sea and by land: runnes a thousand fortunes: escapes a thousand shipwracks, in perpetuall feare and trauel: and many times he eyther loseth his time, or gayneth nothing but sicknesse, gouts, & op-

B

pilations

A discourse of

pilatiōs for the time to come. In y purchase of this goodly repose, he bestoweth his true rest; and, to gaine wealth, loseth his life. Suppose hee hath gained in good quantity: that he hath spoiled the whole East of pearles, and drawen drie all the mines of the West: will hee therefore bee settled in quiet? can hee say that he is content? All charges and iourneies past, by his passed paines he heapeth vp but future disquietnesse both of

minde

Life and Death.

minde and body; from
one trauell falling into
another, neuer ending,
but changing his mis-
eries. Hee desired to
haue them, and nowe
feares to lose them: he
got them with burning
ardour, & possesseth in
trembling cold; he ad-
uentured amōg theeues
to seek them; & hauing
found them, theeues &
robbers on all sides, run
mainely on him: he la-
boured to digge them
out of the earth, and
now is inforced to re-
digge, and rehide them.

A discourse of

Finally, comming from
all his voiajes he comes
into a prison: and for an
end of his bodily trauels
is taken with endlesse
trauels of the mind. And
what, at length, hath
this poore soule attai-
ned, after so many mise-
ries? This Diuel of co-
uetise, by his illusions,
& enchantments, bears
him in hand that hee
hath some rare and sin-
gular thing: and so it
fareth with him, as
with those silly crea-
tures, whō the Diuel se-
duceth vnder colour of

relie-

Life and Death.

relieving their pouerty,
who finde their hands
full of leaues, supposing
to finde them full of
crownes. He possesseth
or rather is possessed by
a thing, wherein is nei-
ther force nor vertue;
more vnprofitable, and
more base, then the
least hearb of the earth:
Yet hath he heaped to-
gether this vile excre-
ment, and so brutish is
grown, as therewith to
crowne his head, which
naturally hee shoulde
tread vnder his feet. But
howsoever it be, is hee

A discourse of

ther with content? Nay
(cōtrariwise) lesse now,
then euer. VVe cōmend
most those drinkes that
breede an alteration,
and soonest extinguish
thirst: and those meats,
which in least quantity
do longest resist hūger.
Now hereof the more a
man drinkes, the more
he is a thirst; the more
he eates, the more an
hungred: It is a dropsie,
(and as they tearme it)
the dogs hunger: so-
ner may hee burst then
be satisfied. And (which
is worse) so strange in

some

Life and Death.

some is this thirst, that
it maketh them dig the
pits, and painefully
draw the water, and af-
ter will not suffer them
to drinke. In the mid-
dest of a riuer they are
drie with thirst: and on
a heap of corne cry out
of famine: they haue
goods and dare not vse
them: they haue ioyes
it seemes, and doe not
enioy the: they neither
haue for theselues, nor
for another: but of all
they haue, they haue
nothing: and yet haue
wāt of all they haue not.

A discourse of

Let vs then returne to that, that the attaining of all these deceiueable goods is nothing else but wearinesse of body; & the possession for the most part, but wearines of the mind: which certainly is so much the greater, as is more sensible, more subtile, and more tender the soule then the body. But the heap of al misery is, when they come to lose them; when either shipwrack, or sacking, or inuasion, or fire, or such like calamities, to which
these

Life and Death.

these frayle things are
subiect, doth take and
cary them from them.
Then fall they to cry, to
weep, & to torment them
selues, as little children
that haue lost their play
game; which notwith-
standing is nothing
worth. One cannot per-
swade them, that mortall
me haue any other good
in this world, but that
which is mortall. They
are in their owne con-
ceits not onely spoyled,
but altogether slayed.
And, forasmuch as in
these vaine things they

A discourse of

have fixt all their hope;
having lost them, they
fall into despaire, out of
the which commonly
they cannot bee with-
drawen. And (which is
more) al, that they have
not gained according
to the accountes they
made, they esteem lost:
all that, which turnes
them not to great and
extraordinary profite,
they accounte as da-
mage: whereby wee
see some fall into such
despaire, as they cast
away themselves. In
short, the recompence

that

Life and Death.

that conetise yeeldes
thole that haue serued it
all their life, is often-
times like that of the
Diuell: whereof the end
is, that after a small
time hauing gratified
his Disciples, eyther
hee giues them ouer to
a hangman, or him-
selfe breaks their necks.
I wil not here discourse
of the wickednesse and
mischiefs whereunto
the couetous men sub-
iect themselves, to at-
taine to these goods,
whereby their consci-
ence is filled with a per-

petuall

A discourse of

petuall remorse, which neuer leaues thē in quiet: sufficeth that in this ouer yehemēt exercise, which busieth and abusethe the greatest part of the world, the body is slain, the mind is weakened, the soule is lost without any pleasure or contentment.

Come we to ambitio, which (by a greedinesse of honour) fondly holdeth occupied the greatest persons: Think we there to finde more? nay, rather lesse. As the one deceiueth vs, gi-

uing

Life and Death.

uing vs for al our trauel,
but a vile excrement
of the earth : so the o-
ther repaies vs, but with
smoke and winde ; the
rewardes of this being
as vaine, as those of that
were grosse. Both in the
one and the other, we
fall into a bottomelesse
pit : but into this the fal
by so much the more
dangerous, as at the first
shew, the water is more
pleasant and cleare. Of
those that giue them-
selues to court ambiti-
on, some are great a-
bout Princes, others

A discourse of

commanders of Armies : both forts, according to their degree, you see saluted, reuerenced, and adored of those that are vnder them . You see them apparelled in purple , in scarlet , and in cloth of golde : It seemes, at first sight , there is no contentment in the world but theirs . But men knowe not , how heauy an ounce of that vaine honour weighes, what those reuerences cost them , and how dearelie they paie for

an

Life and Death.

an ell of those rich stufs:
who knewe them well,
would neuer buy them
at the price. The one
hath attained to this de-
gree, after a long and
painefull service, ha-
zarding his life vpon e-
uerie occasion, with
losse oft times of a legge
or an arme, and that at
the pleasure of a Prince,
that more regards a hū-
dred perches of ground
on his neighbors fron-
tiers, then the lines of
a hundred thousand
such as hee : vnfortu-
nate, to serue who loues

him

A discourse of

him not: and foolish to
thinke himsele in ho-
nour with him, that
makes so litle reckening
to lose him for a thing
of no worth. Others
growe vp by flattering
a Prince, and long sub-
mitting their tongues
& hands to say and do
without differēce what-
soeuer they will haue
them : whereunto a
good mind can neuer
command it selfe. They
shall haue indured a
thousand iniuries, re-
ceiued a thousand dis-
graces; and as neere

Life and Death.

as they seem about the Prince, they are neuertheless alwayes as the Lyons keeper, who by long patience, a thousand feedings, and a thousand clawings, hath made a fierce Lyon familiar, yet giues him neuer meate, but with pulling backe his hand, alwaies in feare least he should catch him: and if once in a yeare hee bites him, hee lets it so close, that hee is payed for a long time after. Such is y^e end of al Princes fauourites. When a

Prince

A discourse of

Prince after long breathings hath raised a mā to great height, hee makes it his pastime, at what time he seemes to be at the top of his trauell, to cast him downe at an instant: when hee hath filled him with all wealth, he wrings him after as a sponge; louing none but himselfe, and thinking euerie one made, but to serue, & please him. These blind Courtiers make themselves belieue, that they haue friends, and manie that honour them:

neuer

Life and Death.

neuer considering that
as they make semblance
to loue, and honour e-
uery body, so others
doe by them. Their su-
periours dildaine them,
& neuer but with scorn
doe so much as salute
them: their inferiors sa-
lute them, because they
haue neede of them (I
meane of their fortune,
of their foode, of their
apparell, not of their
person) and for their e-
quals, betweene whom
cōmonly friendship cō-
sists, they enuy each o-
ther, accuse each other,

croffe

A discourse of

croſſe each other; continually grieued either at their owne harme, or at others good. Now what greater hel is ther, what greater torment, than enuie? which in truth is nought elle but a feauer *Hectique* of the minde: ſo they are vtterly frustrate of all friendship, euer iudged by the wiſeſt the chiefe & ſoueraigne good among men. Will you ſee it more clearly? Let but Fortune turne hir backe, euerie man turns from them: let hir

frowne

Life and Death.

frowne , euery man
lookes aside on them :
let them once be disroa-
bed of their triumphall
garment, no body will
any more know them.
Againe, let ther be ap-
parelled in it the most
ynworthy , and infam-
ous whatsoeuer: euen
he without difficulty by
vertue of his robe, shall
inherit all the honours
the other had don him.
In the meane time they
are puffed vp, and grow
proude , as the Asse
which caried the image
of *Isis* was for the ho-

nour

A discourse of

nours done to the God-
desse, and regarde not
that it is y^e fortune they
carry which is honou-
red, not themselves, on
whom as on Asses, ma-
ny times she wil be cari-
ed. But you will say: At
least so long as that for-
tune endured, they were
at ease, & had their con-
tentment; & who hath
3. or 4. or more yeeres
of happie time, hath
not bin al his life vnhap-
pie. True, if this bee to
be at ease, continually
to feare to bee caste
down from that degree,

where-

Life and Death.

whereunto they are raised : and daily to desire with great trauell to clime yet higher. Those (my friend) whom thou takest so well at their ease, because thou seest them but without, are within farre otherwise. They are faire built prisons, full within of deep ditches, and dungeons : full of darkenesse, serpents and tormentes. Thou supposest them lodged at large, and they thinke their lodgings strait. Thou thinkest them very high, and

they

A discourse of

they thinke themselves very lowe. Now as sick is hee, and many times more sicke, who thinks himselfe so, then who indeede is. Suppose them to bee Kings : if they thinke themselves slaues, they are no better : for what are wee but by opinion ? You see them well followed and attended : and euen those whom they haue chosen for their garde, they distrust. Alone or in company euer they are in feare. Alone they looke behinde them : in

com.

Life and Death.

company they haue an
eye on euerie side of the.
They drinke in gold and
siluer; but in those, not in
earth or glasse, is poyson
prepared and dronke.
They haue their beds
soft & well made: when
they lay them to sleepe
you shall not heare a
mouse stir in the cham-
ber: not so much as a flie
shal come neere their fa-
ces. Yet neuerthelesse,
where the countreyman
sleeps at the fal of a great
riuer, at the noise of a
market, hauing no other
bed but the earth, nor

C

coue-

A discourse of

couering but the hea-
ues, these in the midst
of all this silence and
delicacie, doe nothing
but turne frō side to side,
it seemes still that they
heare some body, there
rest it selfe is without
rest. Lastly, wil you know
what the diuersitie is be-
twene the most hardly
intreated prisoners and
them? both are enchain-
ed, both loaden with
fettters, but that the one
hath them of iron, the
other of golde, and that
the one is tied but by the
body, the other by the

minde.

Life and Death.

minde . The prisoner drawes his fetters after him, the courtier weares his vpon him. The prisoners minde sometimes cōforts the paine of his body, and sings in the midst of his miseries: the Courtier tormented in mind wearieth incessantly his body, & can neuer giue it rest. And as for the contentment you imagine they haue, you are therein yet more de-
ceiued. You iudge and esteeme them greate, because they are raised high: but as fondly, as

A discourse of

who shuld iudge a dwarf
great, for being set on
a Tower, or on the
toppe of a mountaine.
You measure (so good
a Geometrician you
are) the image with
his base, which were
conuenient (to knowe
his true height) to bee
measured by it selfe wher-
as you regarde not the
height of the image, but
the height of the place
it standes vppon. You
deeme them great (if in
this earth there can bee
greatnesse, which in res-
pect of the whole hea-

Life and Death.

uens is but a point): But
coulede you enter into
their mindes, you would
iudge, that neither they
are greate; true great-
nesse consisting in con-
tempt of those vaine
greatnesses, whereunto
they are slaues: nor seem
vnto themselves so, see-
ing dayly they are aspi-
ring higher, and neuer
where they would bee.
Some one sets downe a
bouid in his mind; Could
I attain to such a degree,
lo, I were content: I
would then rest my selfe.
Hath hee attained it?

A discourse of

hee giues himselfe not so much as a breathing: hee would yet ascende higher. That which is beneath hee counts a toy: it is in his opinion but one step. He reputes himselfe lowe, because there is some one higher, in stead of reputing himselfe high, because ther be a milliō lower. & so high he climes at last, that either his breath failes him by the way, or hee slides frō the top to the bottom. Or if he get vp by al his trauel, it is but as to find himself

Life and Death.

on the top of the Alpes,
not aboue the cloudes,
windes and stormes: but
rather at the deuotion
of lightnings, and tem-
pestes, and whatsoeuer
else horrible, and dange-
rous is engendred, and
conceiued in the ayre:
which most commonly
taketh pleasure to thun-
derbolt and dash into
powder that proude
height of theirs. It may
be herein you will agree
with mee, by reason of
the examples wherwith
both histories, and mens
memories are ful. But say

A discourse of

you, such at least whom nature hath sent into the world with crownes on their heads, and scepters in their hands: such as from their birth she hath set in that height, as they neede take no paine to ascende: seeme without controuersie exempt frō all these iniuries, and by consequence may call themselves happie. It may bee indeede they feele lesse such incommodities, hauing been borne, bred and brought vp among them: as one borne neere the downe-

Life and Death.

fals of *Nilus* becomes
deafe to the founde : in
prison, laments not the
want of libertie: among
the *Cimmerians* in per-
petuall night, wisheth
not for daye: on the
top of the *Alpes*, thinks
not, strange of the mists,
the tempests, the snowes,
and the stormes . Yet
free doubtlesse they are
not, when the lightening
often blasteth a flowre
of their crownes, or
breakes their scepter in
their hands: when a drift
of snowe overwhelmes
them: when a mist of hea-

A discourse of

uineſſe, and grieve continually blindeth their wit and vnderſtanding. Crowned they are indeed; but with a crowne of thornes. They beare a ſcepter: but it is of a reed, more then any thing in the world pliable and obedient to all windes: it being ſo far off that ſuch a crowne can cure the maigrims of the mind, & ſuch a ſcepter keepe off and fray away the griefes and cares which houer about them; that it is contrariwiſe the crowne that brings them, and

the

Life and Death.

the scepter which from
all parts attracts them. O
crowne, said the Persi-
an Monarch, who knew
how heauie thou fittest
on the head, would not
vouchsafe to take thee
vppe, though he found
thee in his way. This
Prince it seemed gaue for-
tune to the whole world,
distributed vnto men
haps and mishaps at his
pleasure: could in shewe
make euery man cōtent:
himselſe in the meane
while freely confessing,
that in the whole world,
which he held in his hād

there.

A discourse of

there was nothing but
griefe, & unhappinesse.
And what wil al the rest
tell vs, if they list to vt-
ter what they found? We
will not aske them who
haue concluded a mise-
rable life with a disho-
rable death : who haue
beheld their kingdomes
buried before them, and
haue in great miserie
longe ouerliued their
greatnesse. Not of *Di-
onyse of Sicill*, more con-
tent with a handfull of
twigs to whip little chil-
dren of *Corinth* in a
schoole, then with the

scepter,

Life and Death.

scepter, wherewith hee
had beaten all *Sicil*: nor
of *Sylla*, who hauing rob-
bed the whole state of
Rome, which had before
robbed the whole world,
neuer found meanes of
rest in himselfe, but by
robbing himselfe of his
owne estate, with incre-
dible hazard both of his
power & authoritie. But
demand we the opinion
of king *Salomon*, a man
indued with singulargifts
of God, rich and weal-
thy of all thinges: who
sought for treasure from
the Isles. He wil teach vs

by

A discourse of

by a booke of purpose,
that hauing tried all the
felicities of the earth, he
found nothing but vani-
ty, trauell, & vexation of
spirit. Aske wee the Em-
perour *Augustus*, who
peaceably possessed the
whole world: Hee will
bewaile his life past, and
amonge infinite toyles
wish for the rest of the
meanest mā of the earth:
accountinge that daye
most happie, when hee
might vnload himself of
this insupportable great-
nes, to liue quietly amōg
the least. Of *Tiberius* his

Life and Death.

successour, he wil cōfesse
vnto vs, that he holds the
Empire as a wolfe by the
eares, and that (if with-
out danger of biting hee
might) hee would gladly
let it goe. complayning
on Fortune for lifting
him so high, and then ta-
king away the ladder,
that he could not come
down againe. Of *Diocle-*
sian, a Prince of so great
wisedome and vertue in
the opinion of the world:
he wil preferre his volun-
tarie banishment at *Sal-*
ona, before al the Romane
Empire. Finally, the

Emperor

A discourse of

Emperour *Charles* the fifth, esteemed by our age most happie that hath liued these many ages: hee will curse his conquestes, his victories, his triumphes: and not be ashamed to confesse that farre more good in comparison hee hath felt in one day of his Monkish solitarinesse, then in all his triumphant life. Nowe, shall wee thinke those happie in this imagine greatnesse, who themselues thinke themselves, vnhappy? seeking their happinesse in lesse-

ning

Life and Death.

ning themselves, and not finding in the world one place to rest this greatness, or one bed quietly to sleepe in? Happie is he onely who in mind liues contented: and hee most of all vnhappy, whom nothing he can haue can content. Then miserable *Pyrrhus* king of *Albanie*, who would winne all the world, to win (as he said) rest: and went so farre to seeke that which was so neere him. But more miserable *Alexander*, that being borne King of a great Realme, and

Con-

A discourse of

Conqueror almost of the earth, sought for more worldes to satisfie his foolish ambitiō, with in three dayes content, with sixe foot of ground. To conclude, are they borne on the highest Alpes? they seeke to scale heauen. Haue they subdued all the Kings of the earth? they haue quarelles to plead with God, and indeuour to treade vnder foute his kingdome. They haue no ende nor limite, till God laughing at their vaine purposes, when

they

Life and Death.

they thinke themselves
at the last step, thunder-
strikerh al this presump-
tion, breaking in shi-
uers their scepters in
their handes, and often-
times intrapping them
in their owne crownes.
At a word, whatsoeuer
happinesse can be in that
ambition promiseth, is
but suffering much ill, to
get ill. Men thinke by
daily climbing higher to
plucke themselves out of
this ill: and the height
whereunto they so pain-
fully aspire, is the height
of misery it selfe. I speake

not

A discourse of

not here of the wretched
nesse of them, who all
their life haue held out
their cap to receiue the
almes of Court fortune,
and can get nothing, of-
ten with incredible hart
griefe, seeing some by
lesse paines taken haue
riches fall into their hāds:
of thē, who iustling one
another to haue it, lose
it, and cast it into the
handes of a thirde: Of
those, who holding it in
their hands to hold it fa-
ster, haue lost it through
their fingers. Such by all
men are esteemed vn-

happy

Life and Death.

happy, and are indeed so, because they iudge them selues so. It sufficeth that al these liberalities, which the Deuill casteth vs as out at a window, are but baits: all these pleasures but ambushes: and that hee doth but make his sport of vs, who strue one with another for such things, as most vn-happie is hee, that hath best hap to finde them. Well now, you will say, the Couetous in all his goods, hath no good: the Ambitious, at the best hee can bee, is but

ill.

A discourse of

ill. But may there not
be some, who supplying
the place of Iustice, or
beeing neere about a
Prince, may without fol-
lowing such vnbridled
passions, pleasantly en-
ioye their goods, ioy-
ning honour with rest
and contentment of
minde? Surely in former
ages (ther yet remaining
among men some sparks
of sinceritie) in some
sort it might bee so:
but being of that com-
position they now are, I
see not how it may be in
any sort. For, deale you

Life and Death.

in affaires of estate in
these times, either you
shal do well, or you shall
do ill. If il, you haue God
for your enemye, & your
owne conscience for a
perpetually tormenting
executioner. If wel, you
haue men for your ene-
mies, and of men the
greatest: whose enuie and
malice will spie you out,
& whose crueltie & tyrā-
ny will euermore threa-
ten you. Please the peo-
ple, you please a beast:
and pleasing such, ought
to be displeasing to your
selfe. Please your selfe,

you

A discourse of

you displease God: please him, you incur a thousand dangers in the world, with purchase of a thousand displeasures. Whereof it growes, that if you could heare the talke of the wisest and least discontent of this kinde of men, whether they speake aduisedly, or their wordes passe them by force of truth, one would gladly change garment with his tenāt: another preacheth howe goodly an estate it is to haue nothinge: a thirde complaining that his braines are broken

with

Life and Death.

with the noise of Court
or Palace, hath no other
thought, but as soone as
he may to retire himself
thence. So that you
shall not see any but is
displeased with his owne
calling, and enuieth that
of another: readie neuer-
thelesse to repent him, if
a man should take him
at his word. None but is
wearie of the busineses
wherunto his age is sub-
iect, & wisheth not to be
elder, to free himselfe of
them: albeit otherwise
he keepeth off old age as
much as in him lyeth.

D What

A discourse of

What must wee then do in so great a contrarietie & cōfusiō of minds? Must we, to finde true humanitie, flie the societie of men, & hide vs in forrests among wild beasts? to auoide these vnruely passiōs, eschue the assembly of creatures supposed reasonable? to plucke vs out of the euils of the worlde, sequester our selues from the worlde? Could wee in so doing liue at rest, it were something.

But alas! men cannot take herein what part

they

Life and Death.

they would : and even
they which doe, finde
not there all the rest
they sought for. Some
would gladly do, but
shame of the world re-
cals them. Fooles to
bee ashamed of what
in their hearts they con-
demne: and more fooles
to bee aduised by the
greatest enemy they
canne or ought to haue:
Others are borne in
hand that they ought to
serue the publicke; not
marking, that who coun-
sel them serue onely the-
selues : and that the

A discourse of

more part: would not much seeke the publick, but that they found their owne particular. Some are told, that by their good example they may amend others: and consider not that a hundred sound men, euen Physicians themselves, may sooner catch the plague in an infected Towne, then one bee healed: that it is but to tempt God, to enter therein: that against so contagious an ayre there is no preservative, but in getting far from it. Finally,

Life and Death.

that as little as the fresh waters, falling into the sea, canne take from it his saltnesse: so little canne one *Lot* or two, or three, reforme a Court of *Sodome*. And as cōcerning the wisest, who (no lesse careful for their soules, then bodies) seeke to bring them into a sound and wholesome ayre, farre from the infection of wickednesse: and who ledde by the hand of some Angell of God, retire themselves in season; as *Lot* into some little village of

A discourse of

Segor, out of the corruption of the world, into some countrey place frō the infected townes, there quietly employing the time in some knowledge and serious contemplation: I willingly yeelde they are in a place of lesse danger, yet because they carie the dāger in themselves, not absolutely exempt from danger. They flie the court, & a court followes them on all sides: they endeavour to escape the world: and the worlde pursues them to death.

Hardly

Life and Death.

Hardly in this VVorld
canne they finde a place
where the VVorlde
findes them not: so gree-
dily it seekes to mur-
ther them. And if
by some speciall grace
of God they seeme for a
while free from these
dangers, they haue some
pouertie that troubles
them, some domesti-
call debate that tormēts
them, or some familiar
spirit that tempts them:
briefly the world dayly
in some sort or other
makes it selfe felt of
them. But the worst is,

A discourse of

when we are out of these
externall warres and
troubles, we finde great
ciuill warre within our
selues; the flesh against
the spirit, passion against
reason, earth against
heauen, the world with-
in vs fighting for the
world, euermore so lod-
ged in the bottome of
our owne hearts, that on
no side we can flye from
it. I will say more: hee
makes profession to flye
the world, who seekes
thereby the prayse of
the world: hee saineth to
run away, who according

Life and Death.

to the prouerbe ; by drawing backe sets himselfe forward: hee refuseth honours, that would thereby be prayed to take them: and hides him from men, to the end they shuld come to seeke him. So the world often harbours in disguised attire among them that flie the world. This is an abuse. But follow we the company of men, the world hath his court among them: seeke wee the Deserts it hath there his dens and places of resort, and in the

A discourse of

Desert it selfe tempteth
Christ Iesus. Retire we
our selues into our selues,
wee finde it there as vn-
cleane as any where. We
cannot make the world
dye in vs, but by dying
our selues. Wee are in
the world, and the world
in vs, and to separate vs
from the world, we must
separate vs from our
selues. Now this separa-
tion is called Death. We
are, we thinke, come out
of the contagious Citie,
but wee are not aduised
that we haue sucked the
bad ayre, that we carrie

Life and Death.

the plague with vs, that
we so partticipate with it,
that through rockes,
through deserts, through
mountaines, it euer ac-
companieth vs. Hauing
auoyded the contagion
of others, yet wee haue it
in our selues. Wee haue
withdrawen vs out of
men. but not withdrawn
man out of vs. The tēpe-
stuous sea tormēt vs: we
are griued at the heart,
& desirous to vomit: & to
bee discharged thereof,
we remoue out of one
ship into another, from
a greater to a lesse: wee

promise

A discourse of

promise our selues rest
in vaine: they being al-
wayes the same windes
that blowe, the same
waues that swell, the
same humors that are
stirred. To all no other
port, no other meane
of tranquillitie but onely
death. We were sicke in
a chāber neere the street,
or neere the market: we
caused our selues to be
carried into some bac-
ker closet, where the
noise was not so great.
But though there the
noyse was lesse: yet was
the feauer there neuer-

thelesse

Life and Death.

thelesse:and thereby lost
nothing of his heate.
Change bed, chamber,
house, countrey, againe
and again: we shal euery
where finde the same vn-
rest, because euery where
we finde our selues:and
secke not so much to bee
others, as to bee other
wheres. We follow so-
litarinesse, to flie careful-
nesse. We retire vs (so
say wee) from the wic-
ked: but cary with vs our
auarice, our ambiti-
on, our riotousnesse, all
our corrupt affections:
which breed in vs 1000.

remorses

A discourse of

remorses, & 1000. times
each day bring to our re-
membrance the garlike
& onions of *Egypt*. Dai-
ly they passe the Ferrie
with vs: so that both on
this side, and beyond the
water, we are in continu-
all combat. Now could
we cassere this company
which eates and gnawes
our mind, doubtlesse wee
should be at rest, not in
solitarinesse onely, but
euen in the thicket of
men. For the life of
man vppon earth is
but a continuall warre-
fare. Are wee deliue-

red

Life and Death.

red from externall pra-
ctises? wee are to take
heede of internall espi-
alles. Are the Greekes
gone away? wee haue a
Sinon within, that wil be
tray them the place. We
must euer be waking, ha-
uing an eye to the watch,
and weapons in our
hands, if wee will not
euerie houre be surpris-
ed, and giuen vp to the
will of our enemies. And
howe at last can wee es-
cape? Not by the woods,
by the riuers, nor moun-
tains: not by throwing
our selues into a presse

nor

A discourse of

nor by thrusting our
selues into a hole. One
onely meane there is,
which is death: which in
the ende separating our
spirit from our flesh, the
pure and cleane part of
our soule from the vn-
cleane, which within vs
euermore bandeth it self
for the world, appeaseth
by this separation that,
which conioyned in one
& the same person could
not, without utter choa-
king of the spirit, but be
in perpetuall conten-
tion.

And as touching the

con-

Life and Death.

contentment that may
be in the exercises of the
wisest men in their soli-
tarines, as reading diuine
or prophane books, with
all other knowledges
and learnings: I holde
well that it is indeede a
farre other thing, then
are those mad huntings,
which make sauage a
multitude of men posse-
ssed with these or the like
diseases of the mind. Yet
must they all abide the
iudgement pronouced
by the wisest among the
wise, *Salomon*, that al this
neuerthelesse applied to

mans

A discourse of

mans naturall disposition, is to him but vanitie and vexation of minde. Some are euer learning to correct their speech, and neuer thinke of correcting their life. Others dispute in their Logique of reason, and the Arte of reason: and loose therby many times their naturall reason. One learns by Arithmeticke to diuide to the smallest fractions, and hath not skill to part one shilling with his brother. Another by Geometricke canne measure

fields,

Life and Death.

fields, and townes, and
Countreys: but cannot
measure himselfe. The
Musician can accord his
voices, and sounds, and
times together: hauing
nothing in his heart but
discords, nor one passion
in his soule in good tune.
The Astrologer lookes
vp on highe, and falles
in the next ditch: fore-
knowes the future, and
forgoes the present: hath
often his eye on the hea-
uens: his heart long be-
fore buried in the earth.
The Philosopher discour-
seth of the nature of all

other

A discourse of

other things: and knowes not himselfe. The Historian cannot tell of the warres of *Thebes* and of *Troy*: but what is done in his owne houle can tell nothing. The Lawyer will make lawes for all the worlde, and not one from himselfe. The Phisician will cure others, and be blind in his owne disease: finde the least alteration in his pulse, and not marke the burning feauers of his minde. Lastly, the Diuine wil spende the greatest part of his time in

dispu-

Life and Death.

disputing of faith, and
cares not to hear of cha-
ritie; wil talke of God, &
not regarde to succour
men. These knowledges
bring on the minde an
endlesse labour, but no
contentment: for the
more one knowes; the
more he would know.

They pacifie not the
debates a man feeles in
himselſe, they cure not
the diſeaſes of his mind.
They make him learned,
but they make not him
good: cunning, but not
wiſe. I ſay more. The
more a man knowes, the

more

A discourse of

more knowes he that he knowes not : the fuller the mind is, the emptier it findes it selfe : forasmuch as whatsoeuer a man can know of any science in this world is but the least part of what he is ignorant : all his knowledge consisting in knowing his ignorance, all his perfection in noting his imperfections ; which who best knowes and notes, is in truth among men the most wise and perfect. In short we must conclude with *Salomon*, that the

be-

Life and Death.

beginning and ende of
wisdom is the feare of
God: that this wisdom
nevertheless is taken of
the world for meere fol-
lie, and persecuted by
the world as a deadly e-
nemie: and that as who
feareth God, ought to
feare no euil, for that all
his euils are conuerted to
his good: so neither
ought hee to hope for
good in the worlde, ha-
uing there the deuill his
professed enemy, whom
the Scripture termeth
Prince of the world.

But with what exer-

cise

A discourse of

cise soeuer wee passe
the time, behold old age
vnwares to vs comes vp-
on vs: which whether
wee thrust our selues in-
to the prease of men, or
hide vs some where out
of the way, neuer failes
to finde vs out. Euerie
man makes account in
that age to rest himselve
of all his trauailes with-
out further care, but to
keep himself at ease & in
health. And see contrari-
wise in this age, there is
nothing but an after taste
of al the foregoing euils:
and most commonly a

plen-

Life and Death.

plentifull haruest of all
such vices, as in y^e whole
course of their life hath
held & possessed them.
There you haue the vn-
hability and weakenesse
of infancy, and (which
is worse) many times
accompanied with au-
thority: there you are
payed for the excesse
& riotousnes of youth,
with gowtes, palsies,
and such like diseases,
which take from you
limme after limme with
extream paine and
torment. There also
you are recompenced

E

for

A discourse of

for the rrauels of mind,
the watchings & cares
of manhoode, with
losse of sight, losse of
hearing, and all the sen-
ses one after another,
except only the sense of
paine. Not one parte
in vs but death takes in
gage to be assured of vs,
as of bad pay-masters,
which infinitely feare
their dayes of payment.
Nothing in vs that will
not by and by be dead:
& neuerthelesse our vi-
ces yet liue in vs; & not
onely liue, but in de-
spite of nature dayly

growe

Life and Death.

growe young againe.
The couetous man hath
one foote in his graue,
and is yet burying his
money : meaning be-
like to finde it againe a-
nother day. The ambi-
tious in his Will ordai-
neth vnprofitable pōps
for his funerals, making
his vice to liue and tri-
umphe after his death.
The riotous, no longer
able to daunce on his
feete, daunceth with his
shoulders; all vices ha-
uing left him, and hee
not yet able to leaue
them. The childe wi-

A discourse of

sheth for youth: and this man laments it. The young man liueth in hope of the future, and this sees the euill present, laments the false pleasures past, and sees for the time to come nothing to hope for. More foolish then the child, in bewailing the time he can not recall, & not remembring the euill he had therin: and more wretched then the yong man, in that after a wretched life not able but wretchedly to dye, hee sees on all sides but

matter

Life and Death.

matter of despaire. As
for him, who from his
youth hath vndertaken
to combate against the
fleshe, and against the
World: who hath takē
so great paines to mor-
tifie himselfe and leaue
the World before his
time: who besides those
ordinary euilles findes
himself vexed with this
great and incurable dis-
ease of olde age, and
feeles notwithstanding
his fleshe, how weake
soeuer, Stronger of-
tentimes then his spi-
rit: what good I pray

A discourse of

can hee haue but onely herein : that he sees his death at hand , that he sees his combate finished, that hee sees himselfe ready to depart by death out of this loathsome prison , wherein all his life time hee hath beene racked and tormented ? I will not here speak of the infinit evils wherewith men in all ages are annoyed , as losse of friends and parents, banishments, exiles, disgraces, and such others , common and ordinary in the world :

Life and Death.

one cōplayning of loo-
sing his children, ano-
ther of hauing them :
one making sorrow for
his wiues death, another
for his life : one finding
fault, that he is too high
in court, another that he
is not high enough. The
world is so full of euils,
that to write of al, wold
require another world
as great as it selfe. Suf-
ficeth ; that if the most
happy in mens opini-
ons doe counterpoize
his haps with his mis-
happes, hee shall iudge
himselſe vnhappy : and

A discourse of

hee iudge him happy ,
who had hee beene set
three dayes in his place,
woulde giue it ouer to
him that came next :
yea, sooner then hee,
who shall consider, in
all the goods that euer
he hath had, the euils he
hath endured to get the,
and hauing them to re-
taine and keepe them (I
speake of the pleasures
that may bee kept, and
not of those that wi-
ther in a moment) will
iudge of himselfe, and
by himselfe, that the
keeping it selfe of the

greatest

Life and Death.

greatest felicitie in this world, is full of vnhappinesse and infelicitie. Conclude then, that Childe-hood is but a foolish simplicity; youth a vaine heate; manhood, a paineful carefulnesse; and olde-age, a noisome languishing: that our playes are but tears, our pleasures feauers of the minde, our goods, rackes, & tormentes, our honours heauie vanities, our rest, vnreste: that passing from age to age, is but passing from euill to

euill

A discourse of

euill, and from the lesse
vnto the greater:& that
alwayes it is but one
waue driuing on ano-
ther, vntil we be arriued
at the haven of death.
Conclude I say, that life
is but a wishing for the
future, and a bewailing
of the past : a loathing
of what we haue tasted,
and a longing for that
wee haue not tasted : a
vaine memory of the
state past, and a doubt-
full expectation of the
state to come : Finally,
that in all our life there
is nothing certain, no-

thing

Life and Death.

thing assured, but the certainty & vncertainty of death. Behold, now comes death vnto vs : Behold hir, whose approche wee so much feare. Wee are now to consider whether shee be such as we are made belieue : and whether wee ought so greatly to flie hir, as commonly we doe. We are afraid of hir : but like little children of a vizer, or of the Images of *Hecate*. We haue hir in horror: but because we cōceiue hir not such as shee is,

but

A discourse of

but ougly, terrible, and
hideous: such as it plea-
seth the Painters to
represent vnto vs on a
wall. Wee flie before
hir: but it is, because
(foretaken with such
vaine imaginations) we
giue not our selues lei-
sure to marke hir. But
stay wee, stand we sted-
fast, looke we hir in the
face: we shall finde hir
quite other then shee is
painted vs: and altoge-
ther of other counte-
naunce then our mise-
rable life. Death makes
an end of this life. This

life

Life and Death.

life is a perpetuall miserie and tempest: Death then is the issue of our miseries and entraunce of the port where wee shall ride in safety from all windes. And should wee feare that which withdraweth vs from misery, or which draws vs into our haven? Yea but you will say, it is a paine to dye. Admit it bee: so is there in-curing of a wound. Such is the VVorlde, that one euill cannot be cured but by another; to heale a contusion,

must

A discourse of

must be made an incision. You will say, there is difficultie in the passage: So is there no ha-
uen, no port, wherein-
to the entraunce is not
straite and combersom.
No good thing is to be
bought in this World
with other thē the coyn
of labour & paine. The
entrāce indeed is hard,
if our selues make it
hard, comming thither
with a tormented spirit,
a troubled mind, a wa-
uering and irresolute
thought. But bring we
quietnes of mind, con-

stancie

Life and Death.

stancie, and full resolution, we shall not finde any danger or difficulty at all. Yet what is the paine that death brings vs? Nay, what can shee do with those paines we feele? Wee accuse hir of all the evils we abide in ending our life, and consider not how manie more woundes or grievous sicknesses we haue endured without death: or how many more vehement paines we haue suffered in this life, in the which wee called euen hir to our

succour

A discourse of

succour. All the paines
our life yeeldes vs at
the last houre wee im-
pute to death : not
marking that life begun
and continued in all sorts
of paine, must also ne-
cessarily ende in paine.
Not marking (I say) that
it is the remainder of
our life, not death, that
tormenteth vs : the end
of our nauigation that
paines vs, not the ha-
uen wee are to enter :
which is nothing else
but a safegarde against
all windes. VVe com-
plaine of death, where

wee

Life and Death.

wee should complaine
of life: as if one hauing
beene long sicke, and
beginning to bee well,
should accuse his health
of his last paines, and
not the reliques of his
disease. Tell me, what
is it else to bee deade,
but to bee no more li-
uing in the world? Ab-
solutely and simply not
to bee in the World,
is it any paine? Did
wee then feele anie
paine, when as yet
wee were not? Haue
wee euer more resem-
blance of Death, then

when

A discourse of

when we sleepe? Or euer more rest then at that time? Now if this be no paine, why accuse wee death of the paines our life giues vs at our departure? vnlesse also wee will fondly accuse the time whē as yet we were not, of the paines we felt at our birth. If the cōming in bee with teares, is it wonder that such be the going out? If the beginning of our being, bee the beginning of our paine, is it maruel that such be the ending? But if our not

being

Life and Death.

being in times past hath
been without paine, &
all this being contrari-
wise full of pain: whom
should we by reason ac-
cuse of the last paines?
the not being to come,
or the remnant of this
present beeing? Wee
thinke we dye not, but
when we yeelde vp our
last gaspe. But if wee
mark well, we dye ene-
rie daie, euerie houre,
euery moment. Wee
apprehende death as a
thing vnusuall to vs: &
yet haue nothing so cō-
mon in vs. Our liuing

A discourse of

is but continuall dying:
looke how much wee
liue, we dye: how much
we increase, our life de-
creases. VVe enter not
a step into life, but wee
enter a step into death:
Who hath liued a third
part of his yeares, hath
a third part of himselfe
dead: VVho halfe his
yeares, is alreadie halfe
dead. Of our life, all
the time past is dead, the
present liues and dyes
at once, and the future
likewise shall dye. The
past is no more, the fu-
ture is not yet, the pre-

sent

Life and Death.

sent is , and no more
is . Briefly, this whole
life is but a death: it is as
a candle lighted in our
bodies : in one the wind
makes it melte awaie ,
in another blowes it
cleane out, many times
ere it bee halfe bur-
ned : in others it en-
dureth to the ende .
Howsoever it bee,
looke howe much it
shineth , so much it
burneth : hir shining
is her burning : her
lighte is a vanishing
smoke : her last fire ,
her last wike , and her

last

A discourse of

last drop of moisture. So is it in the life of mā, life and death in man is all one. If wee call the last breath death, so must we all the rest : all proceeding from one place, and all in one manner. One onely difference there is between this life, and that we call death : that during the one, wee haue alwaies whereof to die: and after the other, ther remaineth only whereof to liue. In summe, euen hee that thinketh death simply to bee the

end

Life and Death.

end of man, ought not to feare it: inasmuch as who desireth to liue long, desireth to dye longer: and who feareth soone to dye, feareth (to speake properly) least he may not longer dye.

But vnto vs, brought vppe in a more holy schoole, death is a far other thing: neither neede we as the Pagans of consolations against death: but that death serue vs as a consolation against all sorts of affliction: so that we must

not

A discourse of

not onely strengthen
our selues, as they, not
to feare it, but accustom
our selues to hope for it.
For vnto vs it is not a
departing from paine
and euill, but an accessse
vnto all good : not the
end of life, but the end
of death, and the be-
ginning of life. Better,
saith *Salomon*, is the day
of death, then the day of
birth: and why? because
it is not to vs a last day,
but the dawning of an
euerlasting day. No
more shall wee haue,
in that glorious light,

either

Life and Death.

either sorrowe for the
past, or expectation of
the future: for all shal be
there present vnto vs, &
that present shall neuer
more passe. No more
shall wee powre out our
selues in vaine and pain-
tull pleasures: for wee
shall bee filled with true,
and substantiall plea-
sures. No more shall wee
paine our selues in hea-
ping together these ex-
halations of the earth; for
the heauens shal be ours,
and this masse of earth,
which euer drawes vs to-
wardes the earth, shall

A discourse of

be buried in the earth. No more shall we ouer-
wearie our selues with
mounting from degree
to degree, and from ho-
nour to honour: for we
shall highly bee raised a-
boue all heights of the
world; and from on
high laugh at the folly
of all those wee once
admired, who fight to-
gether for a point, and as
little children for lesse
then an apple. No more
(to bee brieft) shall we
haue cōbats in our selues:
for our flesh shal be dead,
and our spirite in ful life:

our

Life and Death.

our passion buried,
and our reason in perfect libertie. Our soule, deliuered out of this foule and filthie prison, (where by long continuing, it is growen into an habite of crookednesse) shall againe drawe her owne breath, recognize her auncient dwelling, and againe remember her former glorie and dignitie. This flesh (my friend) which thou seelest, this body which thou touchest, is not man: Man is from heaven: heaven

A discourse of

is his countrey and his
ayre. That hee is in his
body, is but by way of
exile and confinement.
Man indeede is soule and
spirit: Man is rather of
celestial and diuine qua-
litie, wherein is nothing
grosse nor material. This
body, such as now it is, is
but the barke and shell
of the soule: which
must necessarily be bro-
ken, if wee will be hat-
ched: if we will indeede
liue and see the light.
Wee haue, it seemes,
some life, & some sense
in vs: but are so crooked

and

Life and Death.

and contracted , that wee cannot so much as stretch out our winges, much lesse take our flight towards heauen , vntill wee be disburthened of this earthly burthen. Wee looke, but through false spectacles : wee haue eyes, but ouer-grown with pearles : wee thinke we see, but it is in a dreame, wherein we see nothing but deceit . All that we haue , and all that wee knowe is but abuse and vanitie. Death onely can restore vs both

A discourse of

life and light: and wee think (so blockish we are) that she comes to rob vs of them.

We say we are Christians: that wee belecue, after this mortall, a life immortall: that death is but a separation of the body and soule: and that the soule returns to his happie abode, there to ioy in God, who onely is all good: that at the last day it shall againe take the body, which shall no more bee subiect to corruption. With these goodly discourses wee

Life and Death.

fill all our bookes: and in
the meane while, when it
comes to the point, the
very name of death as
the horribleſt thing
in the World makes vs
quake and tremble. If
we belecue as we ſpeake,
what is that wee feare?
to bee happie? to bee at
our eaſe? to bee more
contēt in a moment, thē
we might bee in the lon-
geſt mortall life that
might be? or muſt not we
of force confeſſe, that we
belecue it but in part?
that all wee haue is but
wordes? that all our

A discourse of

discourses, as of these
hardie trencher-knights,
are but vaunting and va-
nitie? some you shall
see, that will say: I
knowe well that I
passe out of this life
into a better: I make
noe doubt of it: on-
ly I feare the midway
~~that~~ that I am to step
ouer. Weake hearted
creatures! they will kill
themselves to gette their
miserable liuing: suffer
infinite paines, and infi-
nite woundes at another
mans pleasure: passe in-
finite deathes without

dying

Life and Death.

dying, for things of nought, for things that perish, and perchance make them perish with them. But when they haue but one passe to passe to bee at rest, not for a day, but for euer: not an indifferent rest, but such as mans minde cannot comprehend: they tremble, their harts fail them, they are affraide: and yet the ground of their harme is nothing but feare. Let them neuer tell mee, they apprehend the paine: it is but

A discourse of

an abuse: a purpose to
conceale the little faith
they haue.

No, no, they would
rather languish of the
gowte, the sciatica, any
disease whatsoever: then
dye one sweet death with
the least paine possible:
rather pyningly dye
limme after limme,
out-liuinge as it were,
all their senses, moti-
ons, and actions, then
speedily dye, immediat-
ly to liue for euer. Let
them tell me noe more
that they would in this
worlde learne to liue:

for

Life and Death.

for euerie one is there-
unto sufficiently instruc-
ted in himselfe, and not
one but is cunning in the
trade.

Nay rather they should
learne in this Worlde to
dye, and once to dye wel,
dye dayly in themselues:
so prepared, as if the end
of euerie dayes worke,
were the ende of our
life. Nowe contrariwise
there is nothing to their
eares more offensive,
then to heare of death:
Senselesse people! wee
abandon our life to
the ordinarie hazards

of.

A discourse of

of warre , for seauen
frankes pay : are for-
most in an assault, for a
little bootie : goe into
places whence there is
no hope of returning,
with daunger many
times both of bodies
and soules . But to
free vs from all hazards,
to winne things inesti-
mable, to enter an eter-
nall life, wee faint in the
passage of one pale,
wherein is no difficultie,
but in opinion : yea wee
so faint , that were it not
of force wee must passe,
and that God in despite

of

Life and Death.

of vs will doe vs a good
turne , hardly should
wee finde in all the
World one , how vn-
happie or wretched so-
euer , that would euer
passe .

Another will say ,
had I liued till fiftie or
sixtie yeares , I should
haue beene contented; I
should not haue cared to
liue longer : but to dye
so young is no reason. I
should haue knowen the
world before I had left
it. Simple soule ! in this
worlde there is neither
young nor old.

The

A discourse of

The longest age in comparison of all that is past, or all that is to come, is nothing : and when thou hast liued to the age thou nowe desirest, all the past will bee nothing : thou wilt still gape for that is to come. The past will yeelde thee but sorrow, the future but expectation, the present noe contentment. As readie thou wilt then be to redemaund longer respite, as before. Thou fliest thy creditour from moneth to moneth,

and

Life and Death.

and time to time, as ready to pay the last day, as the first: thou seekest but to bee acquitted.

Thou hast tasted all which the worlde esteemeth pleasures: not one of them is new vnto thee. By drinking oftener, thou shalt bee neuer a whit the more satisfied: for the body, thou cariest, like the bored pailc of *Danaus* daughters will neuer bee full. Thou maist sooner weare it out, then wearie thy selfe with

vsing

A discourse of

vsing, or rather abusing
it.

Thou crauest long life
to cast it away, to spende
it on worthlesse de-
lights, to misspend it on
vanities. Thou art co-
uetous in desiring, and
prodigall in spending.
Say not thou findest fault
with the Court, or the
Palace : but that thou
desirest longer to serue
the Common wealth, to
serue thy Countrey, to
serue G O D . Hee
that set thee on worke
knowes vntill what day,
and what houre, thou

shouldest

Life and Death.

Shouldst bee at it : hee
well knowes how to di-
rect his worke. Should
hee leaue thee there
longer, perchance thou
wouldest marre all. But
if hee will pay thee libe-
rally for thy labour,
as much for halfe a
dayes worke, as for
a whole : as much for
hauing wrought till
noone, as for hauinge
borne all the heate of
the day : art thou not
so much the more to
thanke and prayse him?
but if thou examine
thine owne conscience,

thou

A discourse of

thou lamentest not the
cause of the widow, and
the orphan, which
thou hast left depen-
ding in iudgement: not
the dutie of a sonne, of
a father, or of a friend,
which thou pretendest
thou wouldest performe:
not the ambassage for
the Common wealth,
which thou wert euen
ready to vndertake: not
the seruice thou desirest
to doe vnto God, who
knowes much better
howe to serue himselfe
of thee, then thou of thy
selfe.

It

Life and Death.

It is thy houses and gardens thou lamentest, thy imperfect plots and purposes, thy life (as thou thinkest) imperfecte: which by noe dayes, nor yeares, nor ages, might be perfected: and yet thy selfe mightest perfecte in a moment, couldest thou but thinke in good earnest, that where it ende it skils not, so that it ende well.

Now to ende wel this life, is only to ende it willingly: followinge with full consent the

will

A discourse of

will and direction of God, and not suffering vs to bee drawen by the necessitie of destinie.

To end it willingly, we must hope, and not feare death. To hope for it, wee must certainly looke, after this life, for a better life. To looke for that, we must feare God: whom who so well feareth, feareth indeede nothing in this worlde, and hopes for all things in the other. To one well resolved in these points, death canne bee

but

Life and Death.

but sweete and agreeable : knowing, that through it hee is to enter into a place of all ioyes.

The griefe that may bee therein shall bee allaied with sweetnesse: the sufferance of ill, swallowed in the confidence of good : the sting of Death it selfe shall bee dead, which is nothinge else but Feare. Nay, I will say more, not onely all the euilles conceiued in death shall bee to him nothing : but hee shall

even

A discourse of

even scorne all the mishappes men redoubt in this life, and laugh at all these terrors.

For I pray what can he feare, whose death is his hope? Thinke wee to banish him his countrey? Hee knowes hee hath a Countrey elsewhere, whence wee cannot banish him: and that all these countreyes are but Innes, out of which he must part at the will of his host.

To put him in prison? a more straiter prison hee

can-

Life and Death.

cannot haue, then his owne bodie, more filthie, more darke, more full of rackes and torments.

To kill him and take him out of the world? that is it he hops for: that is it with all his heart hee aspires vnto. By fire, by sworde, by famine, by sicknesse? within three yeares, within three dayes, within three houres, all is one to him: all is one at what gate, or at what time he passe out of this miserable life. For his businesses

are

A discourse of

are euer ended, his affaires all dispatched; and by what way he shal go out, by the same hee shall enter into a most happie and euerlasting life.

Men canne threaten him but death, and death is all hee promi-
seth himselfe: the worst they canne doe, is, to make him dye, and that is the best he hopes for. The threatninges of tyrants are to him promises, the swordes of his greatest euemies drawen in his fauour:

Life and Death.

for as much as hee knowes that threatening him death, they threaten him life: and the most mortall woundes can make him but immortal: Who feares God, feares not death: and who feares, if not, feares not the worst of this life.

By this reckoning, you will tell me, death is a thing to bee wished for: and to passe from so much euil, to so much good, a man should (it seemeth) cast awaie his life. Surely, I feare not,

G

that

A discourse of

that for any good wee expect, wee will hasten one steppe the faster: though the spirit aspire, the body (it draws with it) withdrawes it ever sufficiently towards the earth. Yet is it not that I conclude. We must seeke to mortifie our flesh in vs, and to cast the World out of vs: but to caste our selues out of the World is in no sort permitted vs. The Christian ought willingly to depart out of this life, but not cowardly to runne away.

The

Life and Death.

The Christian is ordained by GOD to fight therein : and cannot leaue his place without incurring reproach and infamy. But if it please the graund Captaine to recall him, let him take the retrait in good part, and with good will obey it . For hee is not borne for himselfe, but for God : of whom he holdes his life at farme, as his tenant at will , to yeelde him the profites. It is in the Land-lord to take it from him, not in him to surrender it,

A discourse of

when a conceite takes him. Diest thou yong? praise God as the Mariner that hath had a good winde, soone to bring him to the Port. Dyest thou Olde? praise him likewise: for if thou hast had lesse winde, it may be thou hast also had lesse waues. But thinke not at thy pleasure to go faster or softer: for the wind is not in thy power; and in steade of taking the shortest way to the Haven, thou maiest happily suffer shipwracke.

God

Life and Death.

God calleth home fro
his worke, one in the
morning, another at
noone, and another at
night. One hee exer-
ciseth till the first sweat,
another hee sunne-bur-
neth, another hee roa-
steth & drieth through-
ly. But of all his hee
leaves all to rest, and
gives them al their hire,
euery one in his time.
Who leaves his worke
before God call him,
looses it: and who
importunes him be-
fore the time, looses
his reward. We must

A discourse of

rest vs in his will, who
in the midst of our
troubles sets vs at rest.

To end, wee ought
neither to hate this life
for the toyles therein;
for it is slouth and cow-
ardise: nor loue it for
the delights, which is
folly and vanitie: but
serue vs of it, to serue
God in it, who after it
shal place vs in true qui-
etnesse, and replenish
vs with pleasures which
shal neuer more perish.
Neither ought wee to
flee death, for it is chil-
dishe to feare it: and

Life and Death.

in flying from it, wee
meete it. Much lesse to
seeke it, for that is te-
merity: nor euery one
that would die, can die.
As much despaire in
the one, as cowardise in
the other: in neither any
kinde of magnanimi-
tie. It is enough that
we constantly and con-
tinually wait for hir cō-
ming, that she may ne-
uer find vs vnprovided.
For as there is nothing
more certaine then
death, so is ther nothing
more vncertaine then
the houre of death,

knowne

A discourse &c.

knowne onely to God,
the onely Author of
life and death, to whom
wee all ought endeavour
both to live and dye.

Dye to live:

Live to Dye.

The 13. of May, 1590.

AT WILTON.

f
n
r

18 30 81